United Nations CEDAW/C/BHR/CO/3

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Bahrain*

1. The Committee considered the third periodic report of Bahrain (CEDAW/C/BHR/3) at its 1187th and 1188th meetings, on 11 and 12 February 2014 (see CEDAW/C/SR.1187 and 1188). The Committee's list of issues and questions is contained in CEDAW/C/BHR/Q/3 and the replies of the Government of Bahrain are contained in CEDAW/C/BHR/Q/3/Add.1.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee welcomes the third periodic report of Bahrain, in which its previous recommendations had been taken into account. It expresses its appreciation to the State party for its written replies to the list of issues and questions raised by the pre-sessional working group. It welcomes the oral presentation of the delegation and the further clarifications provided in response to the questions posed by the Committee during the dialogue.

3. The Committee commends the State party for its high-level delegation, which was headed by the Deputy President of the Supreme Council for Women, Mariam Al Khalifa, and included experts from relevant ministries, the parliament and the judicial authority involved in the implementation of the provisions of the Convention. The Committee appreciates the constructive dialogue that took place between the delegation and the Committee.

B. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved since the consideration in 2008 of the State party's combined initial and second periodic reports (CEDAW/C/BHR/2 and Add.1) in undertaking legislative reforms, in particular the adoption of:

* Adopted by the Committee at its fifty-seventh session (10-28 February 2014).

Please recycle

(a) Law No. 36/2012, governing labour in the private sector;

(b) Royal Order No. 46/2009, establishing the National Institution for Human Rights, and Royal Order No. 28/2012, amending certain related provisions;

(c) Law No. 35/2009, aimed at supporting the children of Bahraini women married to foreigners.

5. The Committee welcomes the State party's efforts to improve its institutional and policy framework aimed at accelerating the elimination of discrimination against women and promoting gender equality, through the adoption of:

(a) The National Plan for the Advancement of Bahraini Women (2013-2022) and its implementation strategy;

(b) The vocational and technical training strategic plan 2008-2014, which widens training opportunities for girls in non-traditional fields;

(c) The memorandum of understanding between the Supreme Council for Women and the Information Affairs Authority to boost women's role in the media (2011);

(d) The National Model for Integrating Women's Needs in Development (2010).

6. The Committee welcomes the ratification by the State party of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 22 September 2011.

7. The Committee welcomes the State party's expressed willingness to review some of its reservations to the Convention with a view to withdrawing them or amending their content and the fact that a bill on the matter has been referred to the parliament.

C. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

Parliament

8. **The Committee stresses the crucial role of the legislative power in ensuring the full implementation of the Convention (see the statement by the Committee on its relationship with parliamentarians, adopted at the forty-fifth session, in 2010). It invites the parliament, in line with its mandate, to take the necessary steps regarding the implementation of the present concluding observations between now and the next reporting period under the Convention.**

Reservations

9. The Committee takes note of the assurances provided by the State party's delegation in its opening statement and during the dialogue regarding the possibility of withdrawing or amending some of its reservations in relation to articles 2, 9 (2), 15 (4) and 16 of the Convention. Nevertheless, the Committee remains concerned that no time frame has been set to review those reservations. The Committee reiterates that their withdrawal or narrowing is essential for the full implementation of the Convention in the State party and considers that the reservations to articles 2 and 16 are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention (see the

statement by the Committee on reservations, adopted at the nineteenth session, in 1998).

10. **The Committee calls upon the State party to expedite, without delay, the review of its reservations to the Convention, with a view to withdrawing them or narrowing their scope, in line with the Convention, within an established time frame and with the full participation of women's civil society groups. It especially calls upon the State party to withdraw its reservations to articles 2 and 16, which are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention.**

Definition of discrimination against women

11. The Committee acknowledges that the Constitution, in its articles 4 and 18, stipulates that equality is guaranteed by the State, that all citizens are equal before the law and that there shall be no discrimination based on sex, in addition to the fact that the Convention has the status of law in Bahrain. Nevertheless, the Committee reiterates the need for the State party's national legislation to contain an explicit prohibition of discrimination against women, as defined in article 1 of the Convention.

12. **The Committee calls upon the State party to prohibit and sanction discrimination against women, encompassing both direct and indirect discrimination, in line with its obligations under articles 1 and 2 of the Convention. It recommends that the State party strengthen education and training programmes, in particular for judges, lawyers and law enforcement personnel, on the Convention and its direct applicability in national courts and on the forms and scope of discrimination. The Committee also encourages the State party to strengthen awareness-raising and education measures to enhance women's knowledge of their rights under the Convention.**

Discriminatory laws

13. The Committee welcomes the State party's efforts to review and revise discriminatory legislation, including its Penal Code and Nationality Law. The Committee notes the information provided by the State party's delegation concerning draft laws presented to the chambers of the parliament, but is concerned, however, that the law reform process experiences long delays, that many amendments are still in the process of being drafted and that bills that have been drafted have yet to be adopted.

14. **The Committee calls upon the State party to give high priority to its law reform process and to modify or repeal, without delay and within a clear time frame, discriminatory legislation, including discriminatory provisions in its Penal Code and Nationality Law, as well as in family matters. The Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts to raise the awareness of the chambers of the parliament, religious and community leaders, civil society organizations and the general public regarding the importance of supporting the acceleration of legal reform.**

National machinery for the advancement of women

15. The Committee notes the restructuring of the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Women, the many awareness-raising and training activities carried out and the establishment of equal opportunity units in various ministries

and government bodies. Nevertheless, the Committee reiterates its concern about the limited support provided by the Supreme Council for Women to non-governmental organizations.

16. **The Committee recalls its previous recommendation (CEDAW/C/BHR/CO/2, para. 19) and recommends that the Supreme Council for Women strengthen its cooperation with all stakeholders, in particular by supporting women's civil society groups and non-governmental organizations.**

Temporary special measures

17. The Committee reiterates its concern about the lack of understanding of temporary special measures, which are considered by the State party to be contrary to the Constitution and discriminatory. The Committee notes with concern that no temporary special measures, including a system of quotas aimed at accelerating equality between women and men, have been adopted or are envisaged in the near future as part of a strategy to accelerate the achievement of de facto or substantive equality between women and men in all areas of the Convention.

18. **Recalling its general recommendation No. 25 on temporary special measures, the Committee notes that such measures adopted and implemented by States parties under the Convention do not constitute discrimination. The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation (CEDAW/C/BHR/CO/2, para. 21) and urges the State party:**

(a) **To inform and train relevant officials on the non-discriminatory nature of temporary special measures within the meaning described in article 4 (1) of the Convention, as interpreted in the Committee's general recommendation No. 25;**

(b) **To adopt and implement temporary special measures, including time-bound goals and quotas, directed towards the achievement of de facto or substantive equality between women and men in areas where women are underrepresented or disadvantaged, including in political life, decision-making bodies and the private sector;**

(c) **To include in its legislation provisions to encourage the use of temporary special measures in both the public and private sectors.**

Stereotypes

19. The Committee appreciates the efforts of the State party to re-examine the stereotyped content of school curricula and books and to provide vocational education to both girls and boys, including in non-traditional fields. The Committee welcomes the efforts of the State party, in partnership with the media, to increase the participation of women and to show a positive and diverse image of women in public life. The Committee remains concerned, however, about the persistence of traditional stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in society and, in particular, within the family.

20. **The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation (CEDAW/C/BHR/CO/2, para. 22) and encourages the State party to continue to implement measures to bring about change to the widely shared stereotypical roles of women and men, including awareness-raising and training programmes**

and campaigns, and to promote equal sharing of family responsibilities and the equal status and responsibilities of women and men in the public and private spheres.

Violence against women

21. The Committee notes the existence of a bill to combat domestic violence (on which drafting began in 2007) and the assurances given by the State party's delegation that it is currently under consideration by the chambers of the parliament. Nevertheless, the Committee is deeply concerned about the slow process of adopting specific legislation that would eliminate violence against women in all settings and include a definition of violence and provisions on remedies and sanctions. The Committee reiterates its concern that several provisions of the Penal Code condone acts of violence against women by exempting perpetrators from punishment. In particular, it regrets that the Penal Code excludes marital rape, that article 353 of the Penal Code exempts perpetrators of rape from prosecution and punishment if they marry their victims and that article 334 of the Penal Code reduces the penalties for perpetrators of crimes committed in the name of so-called honour. It also notes the absence of statistical data on the incidence of violence against women and the absence of any rape complaints to the Supreme Council for Women or the police.

22. **In the light of its general recommendation No. 19 on violence against women and its previous recommendation (CEDAW/C/BHR/CO/2, para. 25), the Committee urges the State party to put in place a comprehensive national strategy and programme to address all forms of violence against women and:**

(a) **To expedite the adoption of the bill to combat domestic violence, criminalize violence against women and provide for effective remedies and sanctions;**

(b) **To revise the Penal Code, repealing any provisions contained therein that condone acts of violence against women, such as articles 334 and 353, and including provisions to criminalize marital rape;**

(c) **To provide mandatory training to judges, prosecutors and the police on the dynamics of violence against women and on gender-sensitive procedures to deal with women victims of violence;**

(d) **To systematically collect data on violence against women and girls, disaggregated by sex, age and relationship between victim and perpetrator;**

(e) **To ensure that women and girls who are victims of violence, including domestic violence, have access to effective protection and that perpetrators are prosecuted and punished;**

(f) **To take measures to ensure that the lack of reported cases of rape is not due to victims' fear of retribution or stigma or a sign of lack of confidence in the police and judicial authorities;**

(g) **To address the traditional cultural attitudes preventing women from reporting cases of violence, including through educational and awareness-raising programmes for the general public about the criminal nature of all forms of violence against women.**

23. The Committee welcomes information on the existence of a shelter for women victims of violence, but is nevertheless concerned about the insufficient support services for victims of violence and the absence of data on their reintegration and rehabilitation.

24. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Increase the number and capacity of shelters and services for victims of violence against women, in collaboration with and through adequate funding for non-governmental organizations;**

(b) **Take measures to increase the collection of data, with a view to ensuring access to and availability of reintegration and rehabilitation for women victims of violence.**

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

25. The Committee welcomes the State party's efforts through the National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons, increased labour inspections, bilateral cooperation with countries of origin and the provision of psychological assistance to and physical protection for victims. The Committee reiterates its concern, however, about the prevalence and extent of trafficking of girls and women into the State party for purposes of forced labour and/or sexual exploitation. The Committee is particularly concerned about:

(a) The absence of a comprehensive national strategy to address trafficking;

(b) The lack of information on the number of women victims who have benefited from existing programmes and on prosecution and punishment of perpetrators in cases of trafficking;

(c) Reports that fear of retribution by employers and the risk of being detained or deported prevent women victims of trafficking from filing complaints;

(d) The lack of information on the extent and scope of prostitution and the fact that mainly migrant women trafficked into the State party are particularly vulnerable to exploitation of prostitution.

26. **The Committee reiterates its recommendation (CEDAW/C/BHR/CO/2, para. 27) that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt and implement a national strategy against trafficking that includes criminal justice measures to prosecute and punish traffickers, together with measures for the protection and rehabilitation of victims of trafficking for purposes of forced labour and/or sexual exploitation;**

(b) **Provide statistical data on cases of trafficking for purposes of forced labour and/or sexual exploitation and on victims who have benefited from existing programmes;**

(c) **Strengthen training and awareness-raising programmes for the police, border control authorities and other law enforcement agencies, in addition to labour inspectors, on their role in preventing and combating trafficking in women and girls;**

(d) Take measures to ensure access to legal aid for victims and to the necessary assistance, support and protection, including facilitating the provision of residence permits where appropriate;

(e) Raise awareness of the risks of trafficking and exploitation of women for forced labour and prostitution, with a focus on migrant women;

(f) Provide comprehensive information on the issue of prostitution, including measures adopted by the State party to discourage demand for prostitution and to prosecute and punish those who exploit prostitution.

Participation in political and public life

27. The Committee welcomes the initiatives undertaken by the State party to encourage women's participation in leadership positions. It regrets, however, that, their high levels of education and economic empowerment notwithstanding, women continue to be underrepresented in political and public life, in particular in the parliament and local councils and in decision-making positions.

28. **The Committee reiterates its recommendation (CEDAW/C/BHR/CO/2, para. 29) and calls upon the State party to take measures, including temporary special measures in the form of quotas, with benchmarks and specific timetables, to increase the number of women in political and public life at all levels and in all areas, including in the parliament and local levels of government, in the light of its general recommendation No. 23 on women in political and public life. It recommends that the State party promote women in leadership positions and foster a political and social environment conducive to the promotion of women in all sectors.**

Women human rights defenders

29. The Committee notes the statement by the State party that 19 of the 26 recommendations made in the report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry have been implemented and that steps are being taken to achieve their full implementation. The Committee is particularly concerned, however, about allegations that, in the aftermath of the political events of February/March 2011, some women experienced ill-treatment and intimidation by law enforcement officials and dismissals, suspensions and downgrading of professional positions in the public and private sectors, in addition to various other forms of retribution for their civic engagement, including detention and revocation of nationality, and that a number of women remain in detention.

30. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) Expedite the implementation of all the recommendations of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry to their full extent;

(b) Ensure that any sanctions against women who peacefully participated in or appeared to support the events since February 2011 are immediately discontinued and that women do not suffer the impact of their political affiliations and are immediately reinstated in the posts that they occupied and are compensated and rehabilitated;

(c) Ensure that women activists are able to exercise their rights to freedom of expression and association and that the July 2013 revision of the

Law on the Protection of Society from Acts of Terrorism (2006) does not have a negative impact in this regard;

(d) **Ensure the representation of women and the inclusion of women's issues in the continuing national dialogue.**

Civil society and non-governmental organizations

31. The Committee notes the information provided by the State party that it is revising the draft law on civil organizations and institutions currently being considered by the chambers of the parliament. The Committee welcomes the assurances that the State party has adopted measures to increase access to funding for civil society associations. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned that under the current Law of Associations (Law 21/1989):

(a) Women's freedom of association is hindered by lengthy registration procedures and excessive supervision, in addition to the need to channel international funding requests to the Ministry of the Interior;

(b) Women's associations are prohibited from engaging in political activities.

32. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take specific steps, including through legal amendments, to create and ensure an enabling environment in which women's civil society groups and non-governmental organizations working on gender equality and women's empowerment may be freely established and can freely raise funds and operate. It also recommends that the State party strengthen its consultation with civil society in this regard;**

(b) **Ensure that the draft law on civil organizations and institutions enables women's non-governmental organizations and associations to engage in the public and political life of the country, in line with article 7 (c) of the Convention.**

Nationality

33. The Committee welcomes the Royal Order of 2011 granting Bahraini nationality to 335 children of Bahraini women married to foreigners and notes with appreciation the Cabinet decision of January 2014 granting Bahraini nationality to the children of Bahraini women married to foreigners, subject to certain conditions. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned that women still do not enjoy equal rights to nationality, given that men automatically confer their nationality to their children, while Bahraini women do not. The Committee notes the slow pace of adoption of the draft amendments to the Nationality Law and is especially concerned that such amendments will not automatically grant children of Bahraini women married to foreigners the nationality of their mothers, but will only codify the present system according to which, women, upon request and royal decision, can transfer their nationality to their children. In addition, the Committee is concerned about the situation of stateless persons, including the possibility of children of Bahraini women married to foreigners becoming stateless.

34. **Recalling its previous recommendation (CEDAW/C/BHR/CO/2, para. 31) and in the light of the State party's commitment during its most recent universal periodic review, the Committee urges the State party to expedite the**

amendments to the Nationality Law to bring it into full compliance with article 9 of the Convention, and to withdraw its reservation to article 9 (2). Furthermore, it recommends that the State party consider acceding to international instruments to address the situation of stateless persons, including the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

Education

35. The Committee commends the State party for the advances made in the education of girls and women and the importance given to their enrolment in non-traditional vocational training. Nevertheless, the Committee notes the persistence of traditional attitudes and stereotypes that affect the educational paths followed by women, in particular in the scientific and technical disciplines.

36. **The Committee recommends that the State party take coordinated measures to further diversify the educational and vocational choices of girls and boys and provide, in its next periodic report, tabulated data, disaggregated by sex, on the above, indicating the respective levels at which courses are pursued.**

Employment

37. The Committee notes with appreciation that the participation of women in the workforce continues to grow. The Committee is, however, concerned that women are disproportionately affected by unemployment and discrimination relating to work and:

(a) That a persistent wage gap between women and men exists in practice;

(b) That neither the Penal Code nor Law No. 36/2012 governing labour in the private sector specifically defines or criminalizes sexual harassment in the workplace;

(c) That Law No. 36/2012 governing labour in the private sector allows for prohibitions on women's employment and gives a minister the power to determine the occupations in which employment of women is prohibited.

38. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt effective measures to close the wage gap between women and men;**

(b) **Consider ratifying the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) of the International Labour Organization;**

(c) **Adopt legislation criminalizing all forms of sexual harassment in the workplace and ensure that such provisions are enforced;**

(d) **Ensure that ministerial decisions placing restrictions on women's work concern only pregnancy and maternity protection and do not perpetuate occupational segregation or stereotypes regarding the roles and capabilities of women.**

Female migrant workers

39. The Committee welcomes the commitment expressed by the State party's delegation to adopting legislation that will confer rights and legal protection to domestic workers. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned about the limited scope of application to domestic workers of Law No. 36/2012 governing labour in the private sector, given the many cases of violence, abuse and exploitation experienced by women migrant workers who are mainly employed as domestic workers in the State party. The Committee commends the State party for the adoption of decision No. 79 (2009), aimed at reforming the sponsorship system, but is concerned that conditions in employment contracts set by employers could undermine the purpose of the decision. The Committee notes with concern the lack of information on the availability of support services and programmes for protecting women migrant domestic workers from violence, abuse and exploitation, and on the availability of legal and administrative remedies to complain about violence against them.

40. **Recalling its general recommendation No. 26 on women migrant workers, in addition to its previous recommendation (CEDAW/C/BHR/CO/2, para. 35), the Committee calls upon the State party:**

(a) **To strengthen the legal protection of women migrant workers, in particular by amending legislation to make its provisions applicable to women migrant domestic workers;**

(b) **To ensure that the objective of decision No. 79 is not undermined by discriminatory or abusive provisions in employment contracts;**

(c) **To continue taking steps with a view to effectively abolishing the sponsorship system, seeking technical assistance from the International Labour Organization in that regard;**

(d) **To prosecute and sentence violent, abusive and exploitative employers and recruitment agents;**

(e) **To raise awareness of labour rights among women migrant and domestic workers;**

(f) **To ensure effective access by women migrant workers to legal aid and complaint mechanisms and provide victims of exploitation and abuse with the necessary protection and assistance, including immediate access to shelters and rehabilitation services.**

Health

41. The Committee commends the State party for reversing the practice that requires a husband's consent before a caesarean is performed on his wife. The Committee is concerned, however:

(a) That female migrant workers have difficulty in gaining access to free emergency health services;

(b) That abortion is criminalized even when a woman is a victim of rape or incest.

42. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take appropriate measures to ensure that female migrant workers have access to free emergency medical services;**

(b) **Consider undertaking legal amendments to allow abortion in cases of rape and incest, with a view to protecting the best interests of the victim, and to remove punitive measures imposed on women who undergo an abortion in such cases, in the light of its general recommendation No. 24 on women and health.**

Marriage and family relations

43. The Committee takes note of the assurances by the State party's delegation that polygamy and early marriage are not common in the State party. Nevertheless, the Committee remains concerned that women continue to be denied equal rights with men with regard to family relations, in particular marriage, age of marriage, divorce, child custody, guardianship and inheritance, under existing laws. The Committee notes with interest the adoption of the first part of the Law of Family Rulings (Law No. 19 of 2009), which pertains to family issues within the Sunni community. It remains concerned, however, that the lack of a uniform family code and the fact that the law does not apply in Shiite courts leave Shiite women unprotected by a codified personal status law.

44. **The Committee encourages the State party to build on the progress achieved concerning the first part of the Law of Family Rulings (Law No. 19 of 2009) and expedite the adoption of the second part of the legislation, with a view to adopting a unified family law that provides for equality and effective access to justice in family issues. In this regard, it recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take steps to ensure access to justice in family issues for the Shiite community;**

(b) **Raise awareness about the need for a unified family law that ensures women's rights under the Convention;**

(c) **Draw on the examples of other countries with similar religious backgrounds and legal systems that have reconciled their national legislation with the legally binding international instruments that they have ratified, specifically regarding equal rights for women and men concerning marriage, divorce, child custody and inheritance;**

(d) **The Committee also reiterates its recommendation (CEDAW/C/BHR/CO/2, para. 39) that the State party raise the minimum age of marriage for girls to 18 years, to be equal to that of boys, and to take specific measures to end the practice of polygamy. The Committee calls upon the State party to reassess its reservations to articles 15 (4) and 16 of the Convention with a view to their withdrawal.**

Economic consequences of divorce

45. The Committee notes the information provided by the State party on contemporary divorce practices. It is seriously concerned, however, about the discrimination and legal restrictions that women continue to face in the context of divorce. The Committee reiterates its concern about the negative economic

consequences on women as a result of divorce, including obligations to return dowry, pay compensation and accept limited alimony.

46. **In the light of its general recommendation No. 29 on the economic consequences of marriage, family relations and their dissolution, the Committee calls upon the State party to fully harmonize the Law of Family Rulings (Law No. 19 of 2009) with the Convention, so as to eliminate restrictions on and discrimination against women in matters relating to divorce. The Committee encourages the State party to expedite the study on the economic consequences of divorce on women and to adopt legislative measures to remedy possible adverse effects of existing rules of property distribution and ownership.**

National human rights institution

47. The Committee welcomes the establishment of the National Institution for Human Rights. Nevertheless, the Committee notes that, to date, it has not applied for accreditation with the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. It also notes the absence of information regarding its mandate and available resources.

48. **The Committee recommends that the State party encourage the National Institution for Human Rights to apply for accreditation with the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights; strengthen its independence, effectiveness and visibility in line with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (Paris Principles); and provide it with sufficient human and financial resources and a specific mandate on gender equality and women's rights, in addition to a mechanism enabling women to complain about violations of their rights under the Convention.**

Optional Protocol

49. **The Committee encourages the State party to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention.**

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

50. **The Committee calls upon the State party to use the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in its efforts to implement the provisions of the Convention.**

Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 development framework

51. **The Committee calls for the integration of a gender perspective, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, into all efforts aimed at the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and in relation to the post-2015 development framework.**

Dissemination

52. **The Committee recalls the obligation of the State party to systematically and continuously implement the provisions of the Convention. It urges the State party to give priority attention to the implementation of the present concluding observations and recommendations between now and the submission of the next periodic report. The Committee therefore requests that the present concluding**

observations be disseminated in a timely manner, in the official language of the State party, to the relevant State institutions at all levels, in particular to the Government, the ministries, the parliament and the judiciary, to enable their full implementation. It encourages the State party to collaborate with all stakeholders concerned, such as employers' associations, trade unions, human rights and women's organizations, universities, research institutions and the media. It further recommends that its concluding observations be disseminated in an appropriate form at the local community level, so as to enable their implementation. In addition, the Committee requests the State party to continue to disseminate the Convention and relevant jurisprudence, as well as the Committee's general recommendations, to all stakeholders.

Technical assistance and visit of special procedures mandate holders

53. **The Committee welcomes the information provided by the State party's delegation regarding the technical cooperation agreement with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, which reflects the commitment of the State party to continued cooperation and assistance in the development and implementation of a comprehensive programme of human rights, including the implementation of the Convention. The Committee also notes with appreciation the information provided that, in addition to the Office scoping mission for the development of a technical cooperation programme, discussions will be held with the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment to set an appropriate date for a visit. The Committee also encourages the State party to continue its cooperation with specialized agencies and programmes of the United Nations system.**

Ratification of other treaties

54. **The Committee notes that the adherence of the State party to the nine major international human rights instruments[1] would enhance the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of life. The Committee therefore encourages the State party to consider ratifying the treaties to which it is not yet a party, namely the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.**

Follow-up to the concluding observations

55. **The Committee requests the State party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 26 and 44 above.**

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[1] The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Preparation of the next report

56. **The Committee invites the State party to submit its fourth periodic report by February 2018.**

57. **The Committee requests the State party to follow the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific documents (HRI/MC/2006/3 and Corr.1).**